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INDIA'S EXPORTS FELL 2.6% TO \$33.47 BILLION IN SEPTEMBER

Trade deficit narrowed to \$19.37 billion as the country's imports dropped by 15% to \$53.84 billion on the back of easing commodity prices

DECLINE FOR THE FIFTH MONTH IN FY2024

This is the fifth month when exports registered a decrease on account of affected sectors like gems and jewellery, petroleum and chemicals etc. "Gems and jewellery segment is affected because of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The Israel-Palestine war, too, will have an adverse impact... we are waiting and watching," Union Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said | P13

12 OF 30 KEY SECTORS SEE EXPORT GROWTH

Exports from 12 of 30 key sectors exhibited positive export growth, including iron ore, meat, dairy and poultry and pharma. Textiles and electronic goods are among the sectors recording negative growth
On the imports front, 20 out of 30 sectors exhibited negative growth including fertilisers, transport equipment, coal, coke, vegetable oil, etc

\$14 bn

WORTH OF PETROLEUM IMPORTED IN SEPT, A FALL OF 20.32% YEAR-ON-YEAR

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VAYANAD • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOTIMODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • DHUBANWAR • SHIVMOGA • MANGALURU • THIRUPATI • THIRUCHY • TRIVANDELV • SANEALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAVARI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THIRUSSUR • KALABURGI



Palestinians with their belongings flee to safer areas in Gaza City on Friday. Israel ordered immediate relocation of 1.1 mn people from the Gaza Strip's north to the south. The United Nations warned it would have devastating consequences | AFP
Family members mourn during the funeral of an Israeli soldier in Jerusalem; Palestinian children wounded in Israel strikes brought to Shifa Hospital in Gaza City; and a distraught mourner beside the body of man killed in the Hamas attack | AP
A woman passenger on her arrival at Coimbatore Airport | S SENGAPANDIYAN

GAZAN EXODUS BEGINS AFTER ISRAEL ORDERS 1.1 MN CIVILIAN EVACUATION

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

INDICATING its ground offensive against Hamas militants was about to take off, Israel on Friday ordered more than 11 lakh civilians living in northern Gaza to move to the south within 24 hours. Later in the day, Israeli forces said they had carried out localised raids in multiple areas in Gaza.

Hours after the order, thousands of scared Palestinians began moving to the south with their possessions by whatever

means possible — cars, trucks or donkey carts. Others hesitated to leave, fearing nowhere was safe. Gaza continues to be sealed off from food, water and medical supplies and is under a total power blackout.

The UN criticised the evacuation order, which covers Gaza City. It said the human displacement would be calamitous and urged Israel to reverse the order. It also warned that such an evacuation would lead to Gaza's entire population cramming into roughly the southern half

13 HOSTAGES KILLED IN ISRAELI ATTACK: HAMAS

Hamas claimed on Friday that Israel's heavy bombardment of the Gaza Strip has killed 13 hostages, including foreigners. It did not give the nationality of the foreigners. There has been no confirmation from Israel

of the 40-km-long strip.

The US, which promised unwavering support to Israel in its operation against Hamas, also shared its concerns. "It's a million people, and it's a very

urban, dense environment. It's already a combat zone," US National Security Council Spokesperson John Kirby said.

Hamas, which has in the past been accused of using civilians as human shields, asked the Gaza residents to stay put, saying the Israeli order was a ploy to divide Gaza. "Hold onto your land," it urged the people.

As per Israeli officials, the aim of the looming ground offensive is dismantling Hamas' terror infrastructure, much of which is buried underground.

Time to walk together for peace: Modi

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR AND YESHI SELI @NewDelhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said terrorism anywhere and in any form is against humanity. His remarks came in the wake of the Israel-Hamas conflict that has already killed thousands of innocent people on both sides of the Gaza Strip.

Modi said it is time for peace

and brotherhood and to move forward while walking together. It brought back memories of him telling Russian President Vladimir Putin just about a year ago, "Now is not a time for war," his the context of the Ukraine conflict.

Recalling that India has faced cross-border terrorism for decades, he said, "No matter where terrorism occurs, for whatever reason, in whatever form, it is

against humanity." He made the point in his inaugural address at the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit here.

Meanwhile, a flight from Tel Aviv brought the first batch of 212 Indians, including an infant, to Delhi. There was a long queue of Indians, including students, at the Ben Gurion airport to board the special flight under Operation Ajaay from the Israeli capital.

Fans turn to cloakrooms, dorms before India-Pak tie

GOMESH S @Ahmedabad

IT'S about 11 am here on Friday. Golu Singh is getting ready for what's to come at the Ahmedabad Junction. He is an attendant with Umiya Enterprise, the contractor who runs the cloakroom in the city's biggest railway station. With the much-anticipated India-Pakistan match a day away, Singh is expecting busy business.

Ever since the fixtures were announced in June, the contest between the arch-rivals has been the biggest talking point. The hotel prices surged manifold and so did the airfare. To give a perspective, the hotels that used to cost about ₹2,000 were charging at least ₹25,000 and it got dearer as dates came closer. There were reports that fans even resorted to booking hospital beds.

That's not all. Several auto rickshaws have turned their vehicles into luggage-holding facilities during the game. As per the agreement, they will drop fans to the stadium before safeguarding the luggage. Nish Navalkar, who runs a social media marketing company in Mumbai, did something else. As part of a large travelling group, he decided to book the AC dormitory/retiring room at the railway station.

"This system is all over India. When you book a dorm, they give you a locker as well. If we don't get a locker, we will use the cloakroom or tie up the luggage to our beds. Since dorm was for men, I had to book IRCTC AC lounge for my wife. It cost ₹1400 for 24 hrs. For the lounge, it is ₹50 per hour," says Navalkar.

Tunnel roads

State looking at project blind-folded

While the state govt is planning to dig tunnels 14-15 metres underground as part of 195-km-long tunnel road network for Bengaluru, experts are shocked at such a plan being considered without understanding the city's subterranean features

PART 2 | P2

I-T raid on contractors' assn VP nets ₹42 cr in Bengaluru

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru



The cash seized at the residence of vice-president of the Karnataka Contractors' Association R Ambikapathy, in Bengaluru on Friday | EXPRESS

SLEUTHS of the I-T Department seized ₹42 crore in cash from the residence of R Ambikapathy, vice-president of the Karnataka Contractors' Association, here on Friday. This is touted as one of the high-profile IT raids in which a huge stash of cash has been seized in recent times.

Ambikapathy is the husband of ex-corporator Ashwathamma, who is said to be the sister of a ex-Congress MLA, who contested as an independent in the May 10 Assembly polls and lost. P4

T20 all set to feature in 2028 Oly

Mumbai: Cricket is all set to feature in the 2028 Olympics as the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Executive Board on Friday approved the proposal of Los Angeles Games organisers to include the sport in the event. The proposal will be put to vote during the IOC session which begins here on Sunday.

Journalist KS Sachidananda Murthy passes away



Bengaluru: Veteran journalist KS Sachidananda Murthy, 68, died at a hospital in Bengaluru on Friday. He was recovering after a lung transplant surgery. He had worked as the Resident Editor of The Week and Malayala Manorama, in New Delhi. Before joining The Week in 1982 in Bengaluru, Murthy, a native of Kolar, had worked with Indian Express in Bengaluru. P9

CREDAI BENGALURU REALTY EXPO'23

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Outer Ring Road, Bengaluru

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